

"The individual citizen has no federal constitutional right to vote for electors for the President of the United States." (Bush v. Gore, 531 U.S. 98, 104 (2000))

*"Thanks to the long and peculiar way in which suffrage evolved in the United States, the U. S. Constitution contains no affirmative right to vote for American citizens. That is likely the most important single gap in our Constitution, and it ought to be remedied as soon as possible."
(Alexander Keyssar, Matthew W. Stirling, Jr., Professor of History and Social Policy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. His books include *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States.*)*

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today went to the House floor during the debate over the Electoral College votes from Ohio and said, "I want to be clear. Today's objection is *not* about an individual, but our institutions. It is not about Republicans, but our Republic. It is not about Democrats, but our democracy. It is not about an

ELECTION

RESULT

, but our

ELECTION

SYSTEM -

it is broken

and needs fixing.

"The fundamental reason is this: AMERICANS DON'T HAVE THE EXPLICIT RIGHT TO VOTE IN THEIR CONSTITUTION !

"In 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Bush v. Gore* ruled, "***the INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN has no federal constitutional right to vote for electors for the President of the United States***
."

"Hence, our voting system is built on the constitutional foundation of "states' rights" - 50 states, 3,067 counties and 13,000 different election jurisdictions, **ALL SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL.**

"Consider this: If you're an ex-felon in Illinois you can register and vote. If you're an ex-felon in eleven states, mostly in the South, you're barred from voting for life. There are nearly 5 million ex-felons who have paid their debt to society but are prohibited from ever voting again - including 1.5 million African American males. But in Maine and Vermont you can vote even if you're in jail. Illinois, Florida, Vermont: different states, different rules, different systems.

"A state right is NOT an American citizenship right, but a right defined and protected by each state - and limited to that state .

"One-hundred-and-eight of the 119 nations in the world that elect their public officials in some democratic manner have the right to vote in their Constitution - including the Afghan Constitution and the interim document in Iraq. The United States is one of the 11 that don't! Shouldn't we be one of the 108 that do? As the greatest nation with the greatest democracy in the history of the world I think so!

"We need to build our democracy and our voting system on a *rock*, the rock of adding a Voting Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that applies to all states and all citizens.

"We need to provide the American people with a citizenship right to vote and provide Congress with the authority to craft a *unitary voting system* that guarantees that all votes will be counted in a complete, fair and efficient manner.

"It's the only foundation upon which we can build a more perfect Union.

"Every two or six years every member of Congress asks the people in their district or state to stand up and vote for *them*. Today it's time that every member of Congress stands up and votes for the people to have the right to vote, and to have their vote fairly and accurately counted," Jackson concluded.